

A short Account of the late
D O N A T I O N
OF A
B O T A N I C G A R D E N
TO THE
UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
BY THE
Rev^d Dr. WALKER, Vice-Master of *Trinity College*;
WITH
R U L E S and O R D E R S
for the GOVERNMENT of it.

CAMBRIDGE,
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A short Account of the
BOTANIC GARDEN.

AS the Study of BOTANY has for its object the Wisdom and Goodness of God, which is no where more manifest than in the Vegetable Part of the Creation; it must give the highest satisfaction to every pious mind, when they observe and admire, the wonderful variety and beautiful appearance, to be met with in every Field. The knowledge of Plants is also of the greatest Utility to Mankind, as the practice of Physic is principally founded thereon, and many Branches of Manufactures and Commerce derive from thence their very existence. And when we employ our best faculties and endeavours, to find out the Salutary Virtues of Plants, and their uses for the conveniences of Life; we promote the public welfare, and answer the gracious end and design for which they were given.

Another motive to this Donation was, the reviving the study of Botany in this University, where it once flourished, and was carried on with great Success for many years by the celebrated Mr. Ray, and his Associates of different Colleges in the same pursuit; as appears from the many excellent Books, which they published upon this subject. Since the times of these worthy Persons, we cannot boast so much of improvements in the knowledge or uses of Plants. Collections have been and are still made by private Persons, which for want of public reception, have lasted no longer than the Collectors. Proposals therefore for a Botanic Garden here have been often made, and as oft diverted by difficult times, when from enemies abroad and dissensions at home, our Constitution, our Religion and Liberties have

been sometimes threatened: But now when we have the pleasing prospect of happier days, blessed with VICTORY and PEACE, under the Government of a most gracious and good KING, most deservedly beloved by his people; it is to be hoped, the study of Botany may again hold up its head, and find Patrons to protect and promote it; and in conjunction with persons of application and abilities amongst ourselves, to prosecute a further search into this useful branch of natural knowledge: where, as Mr. *Ray* assures, we shall never want matter for further search.

We have generally had Titular Professors of Botany, but nothing worth mentioning left behind them: Dr. *Martyn* indeed within our memory, laboured much to bring this Science into repute; read public Lectures for several years; perambulated the Country with his Scholars, shewing them the *Cambridgeshire* Plants where Mr. *Ray* had described them to grow, and making many additions to that Catalogue: but this Gentleman's private affairs took him from us, much esteemed for his great knowledge of Plants.

About fifteen years ago, the learned Physician Dr. *Heberden*, was so kind as to oblige the University with a Course of Experiments, upon such plants as he then found amongst us, in order to shew their uses in Medicine. This was entering into the practical and principal part of Botany, to which we had been strangers, since the abovementioned Association. But this Doctor's great Abilities in his profession soon after called him from us, much lamenting the want of a Public Garden, furnished with sufficient variety of Plants for making the like Experiments.

These considerations, particularly Dr. *Heberden*'s most useful attempt, put the present Vice-Master of Trinity College, upon finding out a proper situation for such a Garden; who, with the assistance of his Friend Mr. *Miller*, of *Chelfea*, called in for his great experience and judgement

judgement in such an affair, after several treaties that failed, at last pitched upon, and purchased the *Mansion House* in *Free School Lane* (formerly part of an old Monastery) with near five Acres of Garden about it, well walled round, quite open to the South, conveniently sheltered by the Town on the other quarters, with an antient water-course through the midst of it.

This House and Garden with five or six Tenements adjoining were purchased about two years ago by the said Vice-Master at the price of Sixteen Hundred Pounds. All which he then gave to the University by a Clause in his Will, with full Security not to alter that Clause; but upon further advice he has now given and granted the same by Indentures of Lease and Release to the Chancellor, Masters and Scholars, of the said University for ever. In Trust nevertheless that the Premises so given shall be employed for the sole use and purpose of a public Botanic Garden, under the Government and Direction of such Persons, and subject to such Statutes, Rules and Orders, as upon deliberate thought and best advice, the said Vice-Master judges most proper for answering the intent of the Garden.

— And with this view he constitutes and appoints the CHANCELLOR, or in his absence the VICE-CHANCELLOR, the MASTER of TRINITY COLLEGE, the PROVOST of KING'S COLLEGE, the MASTER of St. JOHN'S COLLEGE, and the PROFESSOR of PHYSIC, and their Successors for the time being, particular Inspectors and Governors of the said Garden, with full power to regulate and govern the same.

And as the design which the Garden is intended to promote, will constantly require two Officers, a Reader on Plants, and a Curator or Superintendant of the works in the Garden; the said Vice-Master has appointed the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Martyn*, now Titular Professor of Botany to be the first Reader; and Mr. *Charles Miller*, the first Curator; both subject to such Trusts and Duties as
are

are mentioned in the Conveyance, he believing them to be well qualified for the said Offices: And for the future he leaves the choice and election of the said Readers and Curators, as the said Offices may become vacant, to the said Governors or Trustees with his approbation during his natural Life; and after his death to a majority of the said Governors for ever: in confidence that they will elect Persons best qualified to execute the design of the Garden.

The said Vice-Master, with approbation of the Trustees, establishes the following Statutes and Orders for the good Government of the Garden; to be altered, added to, or cancelled, as the Trustees shall from time to time think fit.

Imprimis, That as soon as the Stoves and Greenhouse are finished for the reception of tender Plants, and the whole Garden perfected for the hardy sorts, Trials and Experiments shall be regularly made and repeated, in order to discover their Virtues, for the benefit of mankind. — This the said Vice-Master declares to be the principal intent of the Garden: in comparison whereof, Flowers and Fruits must be looked upon as amusements only; though as these do not want their Excellencies and Uses, they need not be totally neglected. “These Trials (as we are well advised) should be particularly made upon those Plants that are reputed Poisonous; for all these are such as have great powers in altering an Animal Body: and if Experience had fully taught us the dose, and manner of using, and all the necessary cautions, it is highly probable, that they might be turned into the most active and valuable Medicines. And as general recommendations of what ought to be done are too apt to be neglected; it might be of use to order that one trial should be made yearly upon a certain number of these Plants; and the result of these trials should constantly be sent up to the Royal Society and College of Physicians.”

II. That in the principal *Mansion House*, the long Room on the Ground Floor, be appointed for the Reader's Lectures and making the Experiments above-mentioned, with an apartment for the use of the Reader. That the large unfurnished Room above Stairs, be made a Library for Books in Botany and other Sciences relating thereto: and a part thereof for the *Hortus Siccus*. That the Tapestry Room above Stairs be appropriated to the Governors, when they meet there to inspect the Works going on in the Garden. That two Frames shall be put up in the said Room: the one with a true Copy or Abstract of the Donation; the other with the Names of the Benefactors, and the Sums by them respectively given, both fairly transcribed on Parchment. That a proper Box be provided for the Original Deeds of the Donation, the Statutes, Rules and Orders, with Locks and Keys as the Governors shall think fit.

III. That the Reader shall always be a Proficient in Botany, and otherwise qualified in Learning, so as to read his Lectures in Latin or English, as the Governors shall appoint. That he be a Person of proper Talents to make the Experiments aforementioned. That a Foreigner who may have distinguished himself for his knowledge in Botany, shall be capable of being elected into the office of Reader. And it is hoped and desired that the Professor of Physic for the time being, and all other ingenious Gentlemen will assist in this Design, and form themselves into such an Association as Mr. Ray had.

IV. That the Curator shall always be so well skilled in the System of Botany, as to range his Plants in their proper order; and especially must be a person fit to be entrusted with the management of the whole Garden: and as so much depends upon his skill, care and diligence, it is necessary that a competent Salary should be provided for him.

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The Conveyance of the House, Garden, &c. was drawn by an eminent Counsellor in *London*, a Friend to the Garden; and has since been seen by Lord *Hardwick*, Lord High Steward of the University, who has been so good as to examine it with great attention, and to make alterations and amendments therein. His Lordship has moreover been pleased to recommend this design in a very favourable manner; and has generously added One Hundred Pounds to the contributions for carrying on the same; which contributions amount at the present to about Fifteen Hundred Pounds.

We have hitherto expended no more in the Year than our Cash would answer; but by our late preparation in the Garden in order to begin with our Lectures on Plants this year, the account of the Garden will now be found considerably in Debt, and the Design thereof in danger of being at a stand without speedy support. The Reader who is Fellow of a College is ready to begin his Lectures in *April*, and is willing to proceed for the present till a proper Stipend is made for him. But the Curator, who lives here at our expence, must therefore have a competent allowance for himself and Labourers under him not yet provided for. This is now submitted to the University, and their Friends: till this is done the carrying on their Garden must be left to Posterity; which would be a great disappointment to the generous Benefactions we have already received.

From this account of our Garden and present state thereof, it is hoped that such a Design for the public Good will merit public Assistance, especially from all Friends to the University, and Encouragers of Improvement in Arts and Sciences.

Mar. 12. 1763.